

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
White River Field Office  
220 E Market St  
Meeker, CO 81641**

## **CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2012-0010-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER: COC74611 Freshwater Pipeline

PROJECT NAME: Renew 4" surface freshwater pipeline to Exxon T78X-12G

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian  
T. 2S., R. 96 W.,  
sec. 18, lot 7, 8, 9, 10.  
T. 2S., R. 97 W.,  
sec. 12, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
sec. 13, lot 1.

APPLICANT: Exxon Mobil Corporation

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Exxon Mobil Corporation (Exxon) submitted an application to White River Field Office (WRFO) on 09-02-2011 for renewal of a 4" pipeline that provides freshwater to the T78X-12G well pad. The original grant was issued 10/21/2010 for a time period of fourteen months, expiring 12/31/2011. The drilling of this well was not completed in this timeframe and now is estimated to be completed by third quarter 2012.

A short-term, surface, 4-inch fresh water line from an existing water storage facility at the Piceance Creek Unit (PCU) 296-23-18 well location has become a part of the fresh water pipeline system connecting the Freedom Unit (FRU) and PCU. An area map is attached as Exhibit A.

The line follows an existing corridor with older Public Service Company and ETC Canyon pipelines as well as recent Exxon lines authorized as COC63441 and COC73096 and on-unit field facilities.

The polypropylene pipelines have been laid from spools within the disturbed areas of the proposed gas and produced water routes and on the well pad immediately prior to the start of drilling. The line will be removed after active drilling ends. Exxon has committed to blocking under the line where it crosses drainage areas. After the lines are removed, Exxon would

perform reclamation (including seeding) on any areas disturbed by the movement of the surface lines or in the removal process. Exxon would place signage clearly labeling the line as freshwater. Their experience with this type of pipe indicates that using it in ambient to freezing temperatures results in movement of side to side 'snaking' limited to around a foot laterally. The line will be primarily 'free draining' and they will also 'blow out' the line with compressed air when not in use to prevent freeze/ plugging.

Renewal of the freshwater surface line would be by a short-term (two-year) right-of-way (ROW), 20 feet wide and 3900 feet long for this well, resulting in an encumbrance of 1.79 acres. No additional disturbance would be required.

The terms and conditions of the original grant COC74611 will be carried forward.

**PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:** The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with (43 CFR 1610.5-3, BLM 1601.08) the following plan:

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Page 2-49 thru 2-52

Decision Language: "To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values."

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW:** The Proposed Action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9, Number E-9. Renewals and assignments of leases, permits or right-of-way where no additional rights are conveyed beyond those granted by the original authorizations.

The Proposed Action has been reviewed with the list of extraordinary circumstances (43 CFR 46.215) described in the table below.

Extraordinary Circumstance	YES	NO
a) Have significant adverse effects on public health and safety.		X
b) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
c) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available		X

<b>Extraordinary Circumstance</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
resources.		
d) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
e) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
f) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
g) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau of office.		X
h) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
i) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
j) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations		X
k) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.		X
l) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species.		X

#### INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

The Proposed Action was presented to, and reviewed by, the White River Field Office interdisciplinary team on 11/15/2011. A complete list of resource specialists who participated in this review is available upon request from the White River Field Office. The table below lists resource specialists who provided additional remarks concerning cultural resources and special status species.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Date</b>
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns	11/25/2011
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Special Status Wildlife Species	11/29/2011
Zoe Miller	Ecologist	Special Status Plant Species	12/05/11

## REMARKS:

*Cultural Resources:* The project area has been inventoried at the Class III (100% pedestrian) level (Camp 2010, Compliance Dated 5/27/2010) with no new cultural resources identified in the inventory area. The existing water lines are within the cited inventory area. There are no known cultural resources located within 308 meters of the project area. There should be no new impacts to cultural resources under the proposed action.

*Native American Religious Concerns:* No Native American Religious Concerns are known in the area, and none have been noted by Northern Ute Tribal authorities. Should recommended inventories or future consultations with Tribal authorities reveal the existence of such sensitive properties, appropriate mitigation and/or protection measures may be undertaken.

*Paleontological Resources:* The proposed action is located in an area generally mapped as the Uinta Formation (Tweto 1989) which the WRFO, BLM has classified as a Possible Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) 4/5 formation meaning it is known to produce scientifically important fossil resources (Armstrong and Wolny, 1989).

*Special Status Wildlife Species:* There are no special status animal species that are known to inhabit or derive important use from the project area nor are there any additional wildlife-related issues or concerns associated with the Proposed Action.

*Special Status Plant Species:* The proposed water line is located in an area with potential habitat for the Dudley Bluffs twinpod and Dudley Bluffs bladderpod, both federally listed species. The nearest known populations of both threatened species are located approximately 3 miles west of the project area. The southeastern half of the proposed water line was thoroughly surveyed for threatened plants during the 2010 blooming season by Hayden-Wing Associates. No threatened plant populations or suitable habitats were located in this survey area. As no known occupied or suitable special status plant habitat is located within 600 meters of the proposed action, the project is expected to have no impact on special status plant species or their associated habitats. If construction activities associated with this project last into 2013, new surveys within 600 m of the entire project area must be completed prior to any ground disturbing activities.

## REFERENCES CITED:

Armstrong, Harley J. and David G. Wolny

1989 Paleontological Resources of Northwestern Colorado: A Regional Analysis. Museum of Western Colorado. Grand Junction, Colorado.

Camp, Beth Ann

2010 ExxonMobil Corporation; A Class III Cultural Resources Inventory of the Proposed PCU 197-36A Flowline Alignment and PCU T78X-12G Well Pad Expansion and Access in Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc., Eagle, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden

1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geologic Survey, Department of the Interior, Reston, Virginia.

MITIGATION:

1. The terms and conditions of the original grant COC74611 will be carried forward.
2. This authorization is for the use of existing facilities only. Any proposal involving surface disturbance requires an application to the BLM for analysis and authorization. New stipulations for construction would be applied to projects subject to the regulations and policies existing at the time of authorization.
3. The holder shall monitor all disturbed and reclaimed areas through final abandonment for the presence of invasive, non-native, and/or noxious plant species. The applicant will be responsible for eradication of noxious weeds that occur on site using materials and methods approved in advance by the Authorized Officer.
4. At least 90 days prior to termination of the right-of-way, the holder shall contact the Authorized Officer to arrange a joint inspection of the right-of-way. This inspection will be held to agree to an acceptable termination and rehabilitation plan. This plan shall include, but is not limited to, removal of facilities, drainage structures, and surface material (e.g., gravel or concrete), as well as final recontouring, spreading of topsoil, and seeding. The Authorized Officer must approve the plan in writing prior to the holder's commencement of any termination activities.
5. The holder of the ROW grant shall not convey, assign or otherwise transfer, in whole or in part, without prior written approval by an authorized officer.
6. The holder of the ROW grant shall notify the authorized officer of any changes in the holder's status, such as changes in legal mailing address, financial condition, business or corporate status, and alien ownership.
7. If construction activities associated with this project last into 2013, new surveys within 600 m of the entire project area must be completed prior to any ground disturbing activities.

COMPLIANCE PLAN: On-going compliance inspections and monitoring of all activities will be conducted by BLM White River Field Office staff during and after construction. Any specific mitigation developed in this Categorical Exclusion, the associated well Application for Permit to Drill (APDs), and the stipulations of the original grant (COC74420) will be followed. The operator will be notified of compliance related issues in writing, and depending on the nature of the issue(s), will be provided 30 days to resolve such issues.

NAME OF PREPARER: Janet Doll

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Heather Sauls

COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, E-9. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Proposed Action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

Field Manager

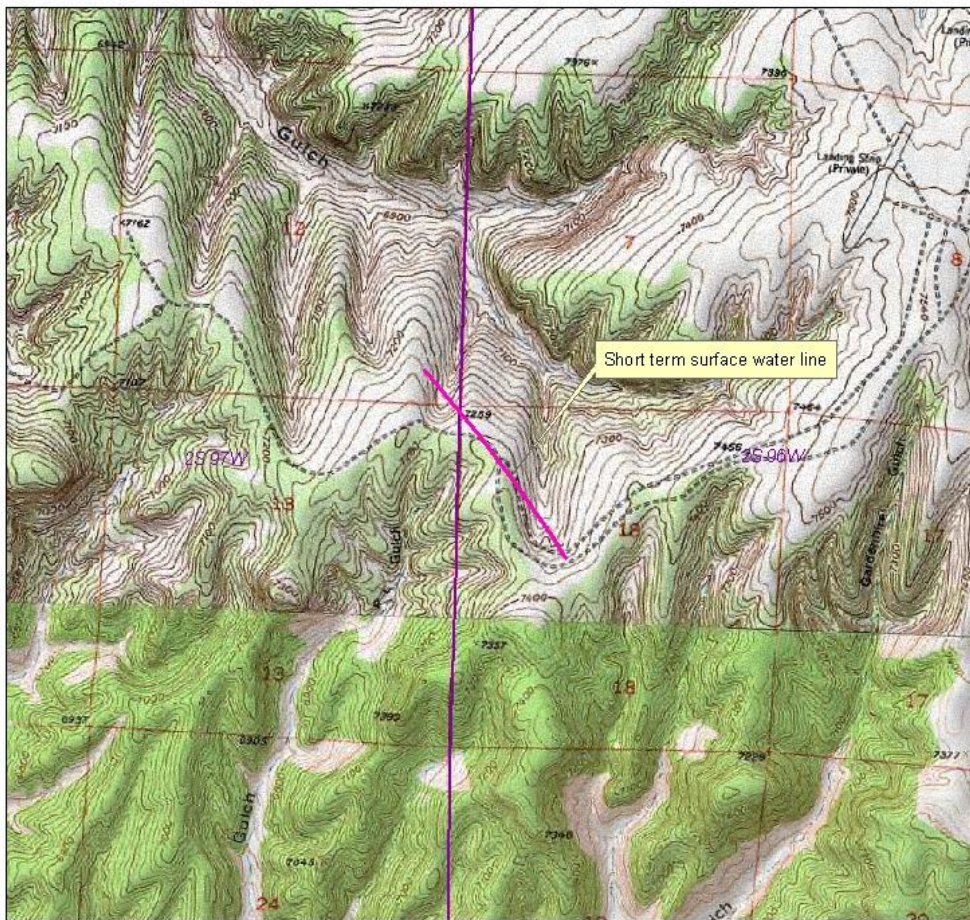
DATE SIGNED:

12/30/11

*(Signed by Ester McCullough on 12/30/11)*

ATTACHMENTS: Exhibit A-Map  
Exhibit B-Stipulations

## Short Term Surface Water Line COC74611

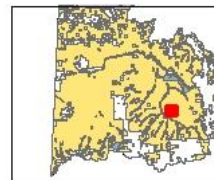


December 2011

0 850 1,700 3,400 Feet

Sources:  
BLM, USGS, CDOW, etc.

Disclaimer:  
Although the data were used to create this map, and the map itself, have been processed on computers of BLM, no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by BLM regarding the use of this map or the data represented, nor does the BLM assume any liability for any such warranty.



### Exhibit A

PLSS\_Townships\_GCDB2008

## EXHIBIT B – Stipulations

1. The terms and conditions of the original grant COC74611 will be carried forward.
2. This authorization is for the use of existing facilities only. Any proposal involving surface disturbance requires an application to the BLM for analysis and authorization. New stipulations for construction would be applied to projects subject to the regulations and policies existing at the time of authorization.
3. The holder shall monitor all disturbed and reclaimed areas through final abandonment for the presence of invasive, non-native, and/or noxious plant species. The applicant will be responsible for eradication of noxious weeds that occur on site using materials and methods approved in advance by the Authorized Officer.
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5. The holder of the ROW grant shall not convey, assign or otherwise transfer, in whole or in part, without prior written approval by an authorized officer.
6. The holder of the ROW grant shall notify the authorized officer of any changes in the holder's status, such as changes in legal mailing address, financial condition, business or corporate status, and alien ownership.
7. If construction activities associated with this project last into 2013, new surveys within 600 m of the entire project area must be completed prior to any ground disturbing activities.



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**DECISION RECORD**

**PROJECT NAME: RENEW WATER CONNECTION TO EXXON T78X-12G**

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-2012-0010-CX**

**DECISION**

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action, as mitigated in DOI-BLM-CO-2012-0010-CX, authorizing the renewal of a freshwater pipeline serving Exxon well T78X-12G.

**Mitigation Measures**

See Exhibit B-Stipulations

**COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS & CONFORMANCE WITH THE LAND USE PLAN**

This decision is in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act. It is also in conformance with the 1997 White River Record of Decision/Approved Resource Management Plan.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The BLM informed the public about this project by listing it on the online WRFO NEPA Register on and a copy of the completed Categorical Exclusion will be posted on the WRFO website.

**RATIONALE**

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9, E-9. This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The Proposed Action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR 46.215 apply.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES**

This decision shall take effect immediately upon the date it is signed by the Authorized Officer and shall remain in effect while any appeal is pending unless the Interior Board of Land Appeals issues a stay (43 CFR 2801.10(b)). Any appeal of this decision must follow the procedures set

forth in 43 CFR Part 4. Within 30 days of the decision, a Notice of Appeal must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at White River Field Office, 220 East Market St., Meeker, CO 81641 with copies sent to the Regional Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Region, 755 Parfet St., Suite 151, Lakewood, CO 80215, and to the Department of the Interior, Board of Land Appeals, 801 North Quincy St., MS300-QC, Arlington, VA, 22203. If a statement of reasons for the appeal is not included with the notice, it must be filed with the Interior Board of Land Appeals at the above address within 30 days after the Notice of Appeal is filed with the Authorized Officer.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL:

Field Manager

DATE SIGNED:

12/30/11

*(Signed by Ester McCullough on 12/30/11)*